

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A printer for recording an image on recording material, comprising:

5      a first input unit for inputting discernment information of said recording material being loaded; and

10     a discriminator for storing reference information representing acceptable recording material, and for checking said discernment information with reference to said reference information to judge whether said recording material is acceptable or unacceptable, wherein if said recording material is unacceptable, printing operation is inhibited and/or an alarm signal is generated.

2.    A printer as defined in claim 1, further comprising:

15    a pick-up unit for picking up an object to create image data;

20    a printing head for printing an object image to said recording material according to said image data.

25    3. A printer as defined in claim 2, further comprising:

30    an auxiliary image memory for storing image data of predetermined auxiliary image; and

35    an image synthesis circuit for producing image data of synthesized image by combining said object image with said auxiliary image, said printing head printing said synthesized image to said recording material according to said image data of said synthesized image.

4.    A printer as defined in claim 1, wherein said discernment information is provided on said recording material in an externally readable manner;

45    said first input unit comprises an information reader

for reading said discernment information.

5. A printer as defined in claim 4, wherein further comprising a second input unit for inputting said reference information therewith.

5 6. A printer as defined in claim 4, wherein said recording material includes a printing surface and a back surface, and said discernment information is disposed on said back surface.

7. A printer as defined in claim 4, wherein said 10 recording material includes a printing surface and a back surface, said printing surface has an effective printing region and a peripheral region defined thereabout, and said discernment information is disposed in said peripheral region;

15 further comprising a cutter for cutting away said peripheral region at least partially from said recording material after said printing operation, to eliminate said discernment information.

8. A printer as defined in claim 4, wherein said 20 recording material comprises a roll recording material wound about a reel, said discernment information being indicated on an end face of said reel.

9. A printer as defined in claim 4, wherein said discernment information comprises a code for representing at 25 least a recording material dealer of said recording material.

10. A printer as defined in claim 4, wherein said discernment information comprises a code of which at least one portion represents a recording material distribution 30 channel of said recording material.

11. A printer as defined in claim 4, wherein said

~~discernment information is a binary code including plural bits.~~

12. A printer as defined in claim 4, wherein said discernment information is constituted by a positioning 5 indicia disposed on said recording material in a predetermined position, and adapted to recording material positioning for printing.

13. A printer as defined in claim 12, wherein said discernment information is represented by at least one of a 10 length, a width, a shape and a pitch of said positioning indicia.

14. - A printer as defined in claim 4, wherein said recording material includes:

15 recording material positioning for printing;

an auxiliary indicia prerecorded at a predetermined distance from said positioning indicia in a feeding direction of said recording material, said predetermined distance constituting said discernment information;

20 wherein said first input unit including a length measurer for measuring said predetermined distance.

15. A printer as defined in claim 14, wherein said length measurer includes:

25 a recording material feeder, driven in response to a driving pulse, for conveying said recording material;

an indicia sensor for detecting said positioning indicia and said auxiliary indicia; and

30 a pulse counter for counting said driving pulse between detection of said positioning indicia and detection of said auxiliary indicia to obtain said predetermined distance.

16. A printer as defined in claim 2, wherein said first

~~input unit is externally operable, and said discernment information is input upon operation thereof.~~

17. A printer as defined in claim 2, wherein said discriminator is operated upon powering on.

5 18. A printer as defined in claim 2, further comprising a recording material sensor for detecting said recording material being loaded; and

wherein said discriminator is operated in response to detection of new loading of said recording material at said 10 recording material sensor.

19. A printer as defined in claim 2, wherein said recording material comprises at least first and second types of recording material;

15 said printer comprising at least first and second printer units for recording to respectively said at least first and second types of said recording material.

20 20. A printer as defined in claim 2, further comprising a cash detector unit into which cash is externally inserted and which detects said cash;

wherein said discriminator is operated in response to 25 detection of said cash.

21. A recording material comprising:  
a printing surface and a back surface; and  
discernment information prerecorded on said printing 25 surface or said back surface readably.

22. A recording material as defined in claim 21, wherein said discernment information is a code and includes information of a recording material dealer and/or a recording material distribution channel.

30 23. A recording material as defined in claim 22, wherein said discernment information further includes

~~information of a recording material type, a recording material printing format and a recording material size.~~

24. A recording material as defined in claim 21, wherein said printing surface has an effective printing region and a peripheral region defined thereabout, and said discernment information is disposed in said peripheral region.

25. A recording material as defined in claim 21, wherein said discernment information is constituted by a 10 positioning indicia disposed in a predetermined position and adapted to recording material positioning for printing.

26. — A recording material as defined in claim 25, wherein said discernment information is constituted by at least one of a length, a width, a shape and a pitch of said 15 positioning indicia.

27. A recording material as defined in claim 21, further comprising:

a positioning indicia prerecorded thereon and adapted to recording material positioning for printing; and

20 an auxiliary indicia prerecorded at a predetermined distance from said positioning indicia in a feeding direction of said recording material, said predetermined distance constituting said discernment information.

28. A recording material comprising:

25 a printing surface and a back surface;

a positioning indicia prerecorded on said printing surface or said back surface, and adapted to recording material positioning for printing, wherein at least one of a length, a width, a shape and a pitch of said positioning 30 indicia constitutes predetermined discernment information.

29. A recording material comprising:

~~a printing surface and a back surface;  
a positioning indicia prerecorded on said printing surface or said back surface, and adapted to recording material positioning for printing; and~~

5       ~~an auxiliary indicia prerecorded on said printing surface of said back surface at a predetermined distance away from said positioning indicia in a recording material feeding direction, said predetermined distance constituting predetermined discernment information.~~

10      30. ~~A printing method of recording an image on recording material, comprising steps of:~~

15      ~~reading predetermined discernment information from said recording material, said predetermined discernment information being provided for said recording material;~~

20      ~~predetermining reference information; and  
checking said predetermined discernment information with reference to said reference information to judge whether said recording material is acceptable or unacceptable, wherein if said recording material is unacceptable, printing operation is inhibited and/or an alarm signal is generated.~~